

you'll see me in hindsight, tangled up with you all night; burning it down by ceruleanstorm

Series: [should i stay or should i go; \[7\]](#)

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Summary:

El braves a storm, chasing away Mike's nightmares.

you'll see me in hindsight, tangled up with you all night; burning it down

Author's Note:

so I had this head canon and it mixed with a prompt but basicallyyy it fell along the lines of "oh my god can you imagine in the future after they're married and Mike still waking up after having nightmares and screaming out for El just like he did when she disappeared and El just taking him in her arms and whispering "I'm here, I'm here, I came back, I promised, Mike" because I can and I hate myself."

12) things you said when you thought I was asleep or [this post](#)

Sleep never takes her when it rains.

She always lies in her bed, tossing and turning, as the thunder whispers memories in her ear as she's haunted by the two A.M. hour. The blankets get tangled and her socks get lost and the lightning illuminates the entire room. Tonight the storm rages on and her eyes study the grey ceiling.

Beside her, Mike is sleeping soundly. El shifts on her shoulder and studies his sweet face, his hidden freckles as he snores quietly. She takes a deep breath, in and out, like Hopper told her all those years ago. *In and out. In and out.* El is with him. She's safe.

The temptation to wake him gnaws at her; he made her promise to wake him whenever she needed him, and this silence, only interrupted by angry thunder, is lonely. But she can't bring herself to nudge her husband's shoulder. He needs sleep. Work is running him ragged and with a trip back to Indiana for the holidays filling their suitcases, Mike will spend the next three days rallying their little rag

tag team of a family until he drops from exhaustion. So she lets him sleep for now, praying the rain doesn't wake him.

Thunder rattles the window and El throws the blankets off, over onto Mike, growling as her feet touch the soft carpet. She curls her toes before tossing one more look at her husband, before tiptoeing out of their bedroom. Walking the quiet hall, she fights the habit to check on Michelle, the soft light of her nightlight pouring out of the open door of her nursery. El knows if she walks in to check on her two year old, she finds herself, knees curled to her chest, next to the white crib Mike built, for the rest of the night as if she could protect Michelle from the storm. As if it presented real danger. Instead, El continues on to the kitchen. She pours herself a glass of water and eyes the dishes that are stacking up. Yet another job to be done before their midnight flight to Indiana. In and out. In and out. I might as well do it now. El turns on the faucet to let the dishes soak. Ten minutes pass where she just lets the warm water run over her cold hands (Mike was always joking about her freezing hands, but El lets him get away with it because he's always trying to warm them up with his own) using her abilities to move the dishes to the dishwasher. Then she washes the blood from her nose and takes an aspirin after turning off the water off. Again she pauses at her daughter's door. The storm rages on.

In and out. In and out.

The glow of the white numbers on the alarm clock read 3:21 by the time she crawls back in bed. Sighing, she takes the blankets back from Mike, who shifts slightly. Lightning strikes again and El watches as his face contorts and her stomach drops. She reaches for his hand, but he turns suddenly, away from her. Thunder, then she can hear Mike's voice. He's sleep talking, and he's saying her name.

Panic fills El like a poison in her lungs. She knows this nightmare. This nightmare is something she's to blame for.

"Mike." El whispers, shaking his shoulder but he doesn't even budge.

In and out, in and out, in and out, please wake up. Please Mike.

"El!" Mike shouts and El takes her hand away like he's on fire. He

hasn't moved, his eyes are still screwed shut, the lightning has just struck.

"Please, Mike. Wake up." She brings her hand back and tightens her grip on his shoulder, her wedding ring digging into her finger. Thunder sounds and all of sudden she's twelve years old again, tears blurring her vision as the boy who pulled her out of the rain is breaking like a promise when they pull Will's body out of the quarry. Suddenly she's helpless- again. "Mike, please."

He shouts her name again and she shakes him harder. "El! Where are you? El!" A clap of thunder hits after his cries and something breaks inside her. *In and out, in and out, please wake up.*

"I'm right here." El buries her head in his neck, hot tears rolling down her face. Why won't he wake up? Why can't she make this stop? This is her fault, this is on her.

This will *always* be on her.

"Eleven stop!"

"Goodbye, Mike."

And then there's thunder. His knuckles whiten around the blue sheets and every muscle under her fingers is tight. Shaking him harder, El fights the scream on her lips. He's saying her name again, begging to know where she went, why she left, why won't she come back? How could she leave him like this and El's running his fingers through his hair, cursing the rain, cursing the thunder.

"Mike, Mike, it's me, El. I'm right here, please, I need you to wake up." El's voice breaks and she kisses his forehead. "I'm right here, I promise."

The spell shatters, and his eyes fly open. Even in the dark, El can love the deep brown color of his eyes. They've always felt like home to her. Then Mike reaches out for her, as if he's seeing her for the first time.

"El." Mike whispers. There's fear in his voice, like he's still trapped in his nightmare and her heart bends and bends and bends.

“Hey.” breathes El and his hands are in her hair. She swallows the lump in her throat, fights the shaking in her hands.

Mike closes his eyes. “I thought I lost you.”

Her heart falls with gravity, shattering into a million pieces. “You didn’t lose me.”

“I did.” he protests. “I lost you once.”

“Eleven! El!”

“I’m here, Mike. I came back just like I promised.” El buries herself deeper into his neck. If she looks at him, guilt will swallow her whole, and it won’t let go. She’s in his arms then, and can hear his sniffling. “I’m here.” She whispers. “I’m right here, and I’m not going anywhere, okay?”

Propping himself on his elbows, he takes her face in his hands. “Promise?”

“A promise is something you can’t break. Ever.”

“Promise.” There’s a smile on her lips as she presses her forehead to his. He kisses her then, softly, full of every emotion as time melts around them. Thunder strikes again, and she doesn’t flinch. There’s only them, their fingers intertwined and the taste of salt as she kisses him. Mike’s finger trace her back, a motion she knows he finds calming.

El pulls away and his brown eyes, the eyes she sees every day when she looks at her daughter, are full of hope again. Relief floods her like the rain flooding their street. He pulls her into his arms then, kissing her forehead. “I’m sorry.”

“Huh?” She reaches for his hand.

“Sometimes, you know, I forget you’re awake.” his voice is tentative and breaking.

El squeezes his hand, their rings colliding. “Mike, it was a nightmare. You were just lost in a nightmare.”

"I should be stronger than that though. How am I supposed to take care of you and Michelle if I can't even remember you're still here after a stupid nightmare?"

El is sitting up in a instant. "Michael Wheeler, listen to me, you're not any less of my husband or a father or my hero or my *best friend* because a nightmare, okay?" Outside the rain beats down, and he nods, a tiny smile on his lips.

"I love you." It's barely a whisper.

"I love you more."

"Um, since when is it a competition?" scoffs Mike.

Since that night you pulled me out of the rain. "Since I agreed to go out with you, you mouth breather." she laughs, twelve and sixteen and twenty seven all out once.

"Then I think that one's on you, since you're the one who said yes and all." He kisses her knuckles and pulls her back down to him.

"I did say yes." bragging, El laughs with him.

"If only you had known what you were getting yourself into."

The best thing that has ever happened to me.

In the morning, the rain will have softened into a drizzle and Michelle will wake them up by jumping on their bed. They won't talk about the nightmare at breakfast as Mike pours syrup on their daughter's scrambled eggs because she refuses to eat them any other way and El breathes easier because she won't have to do the dishes. They won't talk about the nightmare when Mike show up to El's office with the biggest bouquet of roses and dark circles under his eyes. They won't talk about the nightmare when El calls Holly to convince her to babysit so they can go out to dinner for the first time in months.

But for now the rain is the melody to thunder and lightning, and El stays in Mike's arms, her eyes getting heavy.

In and out. In and out. Mike's grip tightens but words are not needed.
In and out. In and out.

Promises kept and burned down, and her whole world turned upside down the moment he found her in the rain. She came back, she wills him to remember that. She came back, she will always come back.

Because she has so much to fight for, so much to live for, even in the sleepless nights and even in the rain, even in the thunder.

Author's Note:

track for the should i stay or should i go; mixtape:
wildest dreams// taylor swift

also about a week ago I realized Michael + El= Michelle.

I Love all for you! Savannah